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Statement on CIA Aid to NSA

Following is yesterday's State Department statement on CIA support of the National Student Association:

We have confirmed with the Central Intelligence Agency that, as stated by the National Student Association yesterday, its leadership has been working over the past two years to terminate the financial relationship concerning support of NSA's international activities which began in the early '50s. Even prior to that time (ed. note: two years ago), the degree of governmental support for those activities had begun tapering off sharply.

U.S. officials added these comments:

1. There was in the cold war tension of the early '50s a spread of Communist subversive activity in international youth organizations and student groups, particularly in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

2. American students, notably the National Student Association, felt the need to counteract this subversive and propaganda activity and to express effectively their own free ideas abroad. The Communist students were well financed from official sources. The American students, however, were deeply handicapped by lack of funds for overseas work.

3. Private contributions were insufficient, hence the agreement between NSA and the United States Government that the Government would help support the NSA effort.

4. Governmental support for a institution such as NSA obviously raises difficult and delicate problems. No matter how complete the

freedom of decision and action retained by the students, such support is bound to raise the legitimate question of whether the purse does not influence the policy. We understand and appreciate this, but at an earlier time the alternatives were limited.

5. Overt governmental support for these NSA activities abroad would have destroyed their utility, because NSA would hence have been subjected to attacks as a instrument of government. Its credibility as a free spokesman, which in fact it consistently has been, would have been impugned at the outset. Indeed, such attack would have come precisely from those students who in fact were paid agents of Communist governments.

6. Therefore, if support were to be given at all, covert support was the only feasible alternative. The very fact that the support was covert and thus known

only to two NSA officers a year guaranteed the integrity of the views expressed by the many other NSA members who participated in international sessions. But because it was covert, it also exposed the NSA and the Government to all of the associations which go inevitably with that word.

Next, it would be grossly unfair now to accuse the students of having been propagandists or agents, or to accuse the Government of attempting to influence what were independent, free decisions and views — and the NSA's decisions, policies and actions have been free — as surely is evidenced by the fact that the organization has frequently and sharply differed with the Government. The purpose of the Government support was to provide free students with the means to do the things they would have done unaided had they had the funds.